DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 075 504 TM 002 607

AUTHOR	Ramirez, A. R.; Liberty, Paul G., Jr.
TITLE	An Evaluative Study of Instructional Strategies and Pupil Cognitive Learning in an English as a Second Language Program of a Spanish-English Bilingual Education Project.
INSTITUTION	Education Service Center Region 1, Edinburg, Tex.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Div. of Bilingual Education.
PUB DATE	73
NOTE	9p.; Paper presented at American Educational Research Association Meeting (New Orleans, Louisiana, February 25-March 1, 1973)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Bilingual Education; *English (Second Language); Mexican Americans; Preschool Education; Pronunciation Instruction; *Second Language Learning; *Spanish Speaking; *Syntax; Technical Reports; Verbal Learning; Vocabulary
IDENTIFIERS	Michael Test of Oral English Language

ABSTRACT

Bilingual education programs for Mexican-American preschool and elementary grade pupils almost invariably include some type of instruction in English as a second language (ESL). Usual ESL Programs for young Spanish-speaking children are found to emphasize pronunciation drill (minimal-a pair drills: pit-bit, choose-shoes). An alternative approach deemphasizes phonological drill, concentrating instead on teaching of word order of new language (syntactic structure). Results of several studies from bilingual projects in Lower Rio Grande Valley show that Experimental groups perform no better than Control (no formal ESL instruction) groups on Pronunciation, Vocabulary, and Communication scales of Michael Test of Oral English Language Production (MTOEP), but that Experimentals scored significantly (.001) higher on Structure. Hypotheses advanced are that young children may benefit only slightly by repeated drills in pronunciation and vocabulary. Primary grade children learn pronunciation by modeling. (Author/CK)

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED 075504

TM 002 607

SUMMARY ABSTRACT

A. Title: An Evaluative Study of Instructional Strategies and Pupil Cognitive Learning in an English as a Second Language Program of a Spanish-English Bilingual Education Project.

B. Authors: A. R. Ramirez, Director, Bilingual Education Project, Region One Education Service Center; and Paul G. Liberty, Jr., Associate Director, Measurement and Evaluation Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.

C. Summary: Bilingual education programs for Mexican-American preschool and elementary grade pupils almost invariably include some type of instruction in English as a second language (ESL). Usual ESL Programs for young Spanish-speaking children are found to emphasize pronunciation drill (minimal-pair drills: pit-bit, choose-shoes). An alternative approach deemphasizes phonological drill, concentrating instead on teaching of word order of new language (syntactic structure). Results of several studies from bilingual projects in Lower Rio Grande Valley show that Experimental groups perform no better than Control (no formal ESL instruction) groups on Pronunciation, Vocabulary, and Communication scales of Michael Test of Oral English Language Production (MTOEP), but that Experimentals scored significantly (.001) higher on Structure!

Interpretation (and hypotheses) advanced are that young children may benefit only slightly by repeated drills in pronunciation and vocabulary. Primary grade children seemingly learn pronunciation readily by modeling after competent English-speaking teachers, although pronunciation drill may be necessary for older learners with more established speech patterns that must be overcome. Formal syntactical drill to learn word order of the new language may be more

important than phonological analyses in ESL instruction. Vital question for bilingual projects: "Are children being exposed to ESL language teaching strategies that are redundant and more relevant for adults and older children?" Multi-project evaluative research, within USOE Guidelines on Accountability, is urgently needed and possible now.

An Evaluative Study of Instructional Strategies and Pupil Cognitive Learning in an English as a Second Language Program of a Spanish-English Bilingual Education Project[1]

A. R. Ramirez[2]
Director, Bilingual Education Project,
Region One Service Center, Edinburg, Texas

and

Paul G. Liberty, Jr.
Associate Director, Measurement and
Evaluation Center, The University of Texas,
Austin, Texas

[1]Appreciation is extended to Mr. Harold Dooley, Executive Director, Region One Service Center, Edinburg, Texas, for his many efforts on behalf of curriculum evaluation and to Dr. H. Paul Kelley, Director, Measurement and Evaluation Center, The University of Texas at Austin, for his support of this and other field education research projects.

Project is supported by a grant from the U.S. Office of Education under Title VII, Bilingual Education, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

[2]Mr. Ramirez is currently First Vice-President, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Association.

Title: An Evaluative Study of Instructional Strategies and Pupil Cognitive Learning in an English as a Second Language Program of a Spanish-English Bilingual Education Project

Authors: A. R. Ramirez, Director, Bilingual Education Project, Region One Education Service Center, Edinburg, Texas; and Paul G. Liberty, Jr., Associate Director, Measurement and Evaluation Center, The University of Texas, Austin, Texas

SUMMARY

Objectives of Study:

Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act has spurred development of bilingual education programs. Although conceptual philosophies of what constitutes bilingual education vary widely, most bilingual programs include some form of instruction in English as a second language (ESL). First, this paper investigates the effectiveness of a widely-used basic oral English language program, the ROCK materials, designed for preschool and elementary grade pupils in the Southwest whose native language is Spanish.

Second, the results are examined for implications to teaching of English as a second language. The ROCK (Region One Curriculum Kit) materials[1] consist of (a) 128 language lessons, originally written at the University of California at Los Angeles and termed the H-200 series, plus (b) newly-developed procedures and materials that provide practice in learning of language patterns and that reinforce the structure being learned, and (c) an extensive set of teacher training materials.

This paper reports the results obtained by comparing the learning performances of youngsters in various Experimental (ESL) Groups with those of pupils in Control (no formal ESL instruction) Groups on a test of oral English production.

---

[1]The ROCK materials are distributed by the Melton Book Company, Inc., 111 Leslie Street, Dallas, Texas 75207.

Methodology:

The effectiveness of the ROCK materials is determined by comparing the cognitive learning performances of youngsters in various Experimental (ESL) groups with those of pupils in Control (no formal ESL instruction) groups on a test of oral English production during the 1969-70 school year. The Michael Test of Oral English Production (MTOEP)[2] was utilized to assess the effectiveness of ESL instruction. In the absence of a standardized measure of oral English proficiency, the MTOEP possesses adequate content validity for assessing performance in spoken English within the range of verbal behavior covered by the H-200 language materials. The MTOEP consists of four scales (Communication, Structure, Pronunciation, Vocabulary) and a Total Score.

The MTOEP is an individually-administered test with very strict standard of administration, even though considerable dialogue with testee goes on. The examiner must appropriately employ alternate-channeling and question-restatement procedures. High inter-scorer reliability was achieved by first training prospective scorers in test administration, and then having them score a standard set of five tapes containing "live data," varying in scoring difficulty, to 95% accuracy with the scoring criterion. Both examiners and scorers were trained in one or two week institutes conducted by psychometrists and linguistically-trained personnel at the Southwestern Cooperative Education Laboratory, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Schools in which ROCK materials have been employed are in communities in the Lower Rio Grande River Valley of Texas wherein Mexican Americans constitute

---

[2]The MTOEP is not available commercially. Examination copies and further information on the availability of the MTOEP is available from either of the authors. A revision has been accomplished by the Southwestern Cooperative Education Laboratory, 117 Richmond, N.E., Albuquerque, New Mexico.

70-85% of the total population. In each of the four studies to be reported, random samples of pupils in Experimental classrooms were drawn and tested at the end of the year. Control group pupils were selected either from non-experimental classrooms in the same school as the experimental classrooms, where teachers were not using the ROCK materials, or from comparable classrooms in nearby schools. All pupils speak little or no English at the start of school, consequently a pretest is not given to first year (kindergarten or first grade) pupils.

Data Analyses:

Analyses of variance were performed to determine differences between experimental and control group means on the four part scores and total scores of MTOEP at the end of the first grade.

Results of Study I: Subjects were 80 preschool or first grade Mexican-American pupils.

ANOVA results are presented in Table 1. Only the Structure scale showed a significant difference between the Experimental and Control Groups.

Table 1: MTOEP Results

	Experimental Group Mean (N=40)	Control Group Mean (N=40)	P
Communication	70.07	67.50	NS
Structure	50.23	32.39	.001
Vocabulary	50.00	47.62	NS
Pronunciation	24.05	23.99	NS
Total	195.35	171.50	.001

Additional Studies:

In another study, kindergarten and first grade pupils in ROCK ESL classrooms were compared with control youngsters in non-ESL classrooms. Testing

with the MTOEP was accomplished during late Spring 1970 at the end of the school year. Table 2 shows these results.

Table 2: MTOEP Results

	Experimental Group Mean (N=183)	Control Group Mean (N=21)	P
Communication	70.13	69.05	NS
Structure	50.45	33.31	.001
Vocabulary	50.10	48.00	NS
Pronunciation	24.01	22.96	NS
Total	194.69	173.32	.001

In a pilot study investigating the effects of the ROCK ESL program during school year 1969-70 with pupils in their second year of school (either first grade or second grade), an advanced level of the MTOEP was used as a pretest and posttest. The results for Experimental and Control groups is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: MTOEP Results

	Experimental Group Mean Scores (Rounded) (N=29)		Control Group Mean Scores (Rounded) N=15)	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Communication	49	53	37	48
Structure	26	39	13	21
Vocabulary	30	33	29	34
Pronunciation	26	31	25	30
Total	131	157	104	131

Although Ns are quite small, the suggestion is that the Experimental Group pupils, having spent a year in the ROCK ESL Program, are considerably higher on Communication and Structure at the beginning of the year and that Control pupils narrow the gap considerably during the year in absence of formal ESL Training in all areas except Structure.

Finally, from 1970-71 data (not shown here), utilizing a newly-developed Structure Test, ROCK (Experimental) group children scored significantly higher (P less than .001) on the posttest than Control pupils, with ability level (measured by the Goodenough-Harris Drawing Test) controlled. (Analysis of covariance was used to statistically adjust scores in instances where group pretest means differed significantly at second year level.) This result was obtained at both first and second year ESL Levels. Detailés on methodology and the scales used will be included in the conference presentation.

Educational Implications of Findings:

The most obvious difference between Mexican-American youngsters who have been exposed to ROCK ESL materials and those who have not is in their control of syntactic structures. Apparently, young children do not improve in pronunciation skills in their second language by repeated exercises in such things as minimal-pair drills (e.g. pit vs. bit -- a slight phonemic change). The Control groups which did not receive such instructional drill, perform equally as well as the Experimental pupils. Likewise, vocabulary skills, in the sense of picture identification, is also known almost as well by youngsters outside ESL program as those who have received training with ESL aids.

One view of these findings is that pronunciation is learned by modeling after a competent English-speaking teacher (shoes vs. choose) and that it is unnecessary to spend much time on pronunciation practice. Young children in particular may not require much phonological analysis. However, phonic analysis may be useful to older learners of English as a second language since they already have well-developed speech patterns and this drill may serve to override established speech habit patterns. Perhaps we have been applying language teaching strategies to children that are more relevant for teaching adults and older children. The consistency and replicability of the findings to date indicate that this could indeed be the case.

On the other hand, syntactic structure drill is necessary for both older and younger children because a new word order, one that is different from the native language, is being learned. Structure may be the crucial area of ESL instruction because, unlike Pronunciation and Vocabulary, English sentence patterns are not learned readily. Although some linguists and some administrators in bilingual-ESL fields would likely resist the notion that Pronunciation and Vocabulary can be easily learned by youngsters whose native language is other than English, yet there is evidence from the ROCK program to support this view and that furthermore the teaching of English structure may be the crucial area of instruction in ESL programs. The hypothesis seems worth investigating. Implications are seen for formulation of bilingual programs and teaching ESL to pupils whose native language is other than English. Opportunities for this research exist within the evaluation guidelines presented by the Office of Education in its emphasis on educational accountability. It seems necessary to investigate whether the findings reported herein are replicable in other educational-community settings where Spanish and English languages are employed in varying combinations in the schools and community settings, such as in retail stores, and city-state agencies.